TWO

LETTERS to a FRIEND

Concerning The

Partition Treaty,

VINDICATING

HIS MAJESTY, KING WILLIAM,

From all Reflections;

And Answering the Arguments of a late Designing Party, that were for Surrendring

TO THE

FRENCH KING

The Whole *Spanish Monarchy.*

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FRENCH KING

HIS MAJESTY,

LETTERS to a FRIEND

TWO LETTERS to a FRIEND Concerning the Partition TREATY, &c.

SIR,

I Return you many thanks for the trouble you have given your self in letting me know so regularly the Progress of affairs during the late Parliament, which (God be thanked for it) is now come to an end; this was indeed much long'd for, I did not increase your trouble by putting you then to explain some things; which, at this distance were not well understood by us; but now that you are more at leisure, and that I know you have opportunitys of hearing matters as freely talk'd of, almost as they were at St. *Stephen's* Chapel: I desire to know what indifferent Men and good Judges say of the Partition-Treaty. We in the Country do generally agree with our Representatives in condemning it. It seems strange to us, that our King, who was rais'd and advanc'd by his perpetual Opposition to the Court of *France*, who was provok'd not only to persist in it by all possible Indignities to his Person, and by their setting on so many Conspiracies against his Life, but by all the strongest Considerations both of Interest and Religion, could be prevail'd on to treat with them, to trust them, and to procure them such an Addition of *Empire* as the Partition Treaty gave them. It seems to us, that this perhaps may have driven the *Spaniards* to those desperate Courses they have taken while they hop'd, by their late King's Will, to have kept their Monarchy entire, tho' instead of saving the whole, they have delivered it all over into the hands of the *French*, without a possibility of redemption, unless others take more care of them, then they have done of themselves. If I judge of this matter wrong, I desire you will set me right. I am so much inclin'd not only to wish well, but to think well of the King, that it raises in me a great uneasiness to see a Cloud on any of his Actions and Councils which gives them an ill appearance. I expect your answer to this, and without more Ceremony.

I am Yours, &c.

SIR,

NOW the scene of Affairs is shifted, and that I have nothing more to tell you from the two Houses, I refer you to the Prints for the Publick

lick News, and so hop'd I might be respited for some time. But I see I am not yet quite at Liberty, you are putting me now on the hardest task in the World, to write of Politicks. It is an easie thing to tell you what this or t'other man said, even *I——H——vs* Speeches cost me only the Trouble of writing out what I remembred of them: Tho' the abusive strains in them came so thick that one drove out another: Only they were so oft repeated, that what was lost at one time was recovered at another. But I am call'd on by you to treat of matters that I do not perfectly understand, nor can I arrive at a full Information about them. You begin right at the Partition Treaty, which is said to have been the occasion of all the Miseries that we feel or fear. And since you will have me tell you my thoughts of it, I will do it very freely. You know I am not apt to flatter or to think well of things because they are done by Men of a high Character: My Biass lies another way: There is so much occasion given for Censure, that common Observation makes a Man fall very naturally into a Disposition of thinking the worst, both of men and things.

I have no excuse to make for our Courts trusting the *French*, or for their entring cordially into their Concerns. If I thought the King was capable either of Loving or Trusting them, I could not maintain in my heart that affection and confidence which I owe him: It is impossible for me to believe it, he knows them too well, and has had too much practice in affairs to be guilty of such an Errour. As far as I understand the matter, this was the case. We and the *Dutch* had got thro' a great War at a vast Charge, and with infinite danger: We saw the weakness of *Spain* in the Business of *Barcelona*: There was no reckoning on them as capable of making a stand if the King of *France* were freed from a War, since when that press'd him on all hands, yet with a small Army he could at his Leisure take that important place: Had *Spain* any intrinsick strength to resist, there was time enough given them to have brought it all together. If I say *France* then with so small a Body made such a Conquest, what could be expected from *Spain* when the *French* King should send his whole strength against them? A Fleet before *Cadiz* and two small Armies marching in thro' *Catalonia* and *Navarre*, might have found it hard to Subsist, but not to Conquer *Spain*. The *Emperor* abandoning all other Thoughts, had during the late War pursu'd his advantages against the *Turks*, and thereby had both exhausted his own strength, and disgusted his Allies. And on the Conclusion of the Peace of *Reswick* he had shew'd so great an Inclination to ruine *Heresy* at any Rate, and so little regard of the Honour of a Prince, to whom he ow'd so much, that this with some other things (that I love not to remember, because I hope that Court will grow wiser) had given so just a Discontent, that few seem'd

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willing to engage in a New War for him and his Family. And his Councils were so dilatory and uncertain, that instead of pressing the renewal of a General Alliance upon the Conclusion of the Peace, he seem'd not to regard it, when press'd thereto. We here were so weary of Taxes, and so jealous of a standing Army, that we brought down our Land Force, first to Twelve Thousand, and then to Seven. Our Fleet kept proportion to our Army. The *Dutch* did not disarm so fast, yet they had no Force to spare, and to be sure, they would unwillingly engage in the Quarrel deeper then we did. While the debates concerning the Army were on Foot, the ill Health of the King of *Spain* was not forgot to be mention'd, and the Danger of the Progress that the *French* might make, if we were reduc'd to such an Incapacity of protecting the *Spaniards*, was often represented; but was often rejected with Indignation, as an Artifice of the Court to get an Army kept up. Things being in such a state, might not the King think that what was left for him to do, was to make the best Bargain he could. How bad soever the Partition may be, it seem'd still more desirable to yield up some parts of the *Spanish* Monarchy, than to let *France* Conquer it, or rather take it all. *Spain* it self, the *West-Indies* and *Flanders* were the Branches of that Monarchy, in which we were chiefly concern'd, and while these were kept entire, in the same hands our interests were pretty safe. It is known, that what advantage soever the *Spanish* Grandees may take of the Dominions in and about *Italy*, *Spain* it self is not stronger or richer for them, but much to the contrary. It is true, their Interests at *Rome* are Fortify'd by them, but we are little concern'd in those. It was not to be imagined, that *France* that had made so much Noise with their pretensions to that Succession, and (how slight soever they may be) had involv'd all *Europe* in Wars upon yet slighter ones; and that saw how sure they were of Conquering so feeble an Enemy, and so weak a Rival, would let all this go for nothing. They did not fear a new Alliance against them, they knew well the Temper both of the *English* and the *Dutch*. They therefore pretended to the *Italian* Dominions. If the King had been in Condition to have talk'd roundly to them, certainly that had been both the wisest and the best method. But those who seem now the most inflam'd against the Partition Treaty, know in their Consciences, that they themselves would never have engag'd in a new War, if the Dominions in *Italy*, much less if the *Dutchy* of *Milan* had been the only Point in debate. I leave it to you to Judge what a Parliament would have said, if they had been call'd, and had found the *French* King in possession of, perhaps, all the *Spanish* Monarchy (as no doubt by what we have seen, he would soon have been, upon the Death of the King of *Spain*) if they had discovered, That Offers had been made to have compounded for that whole Succession, by yielding up the Dominions in

Italy, but that the King and his Ministers had rejected the Proposition: I doubt not, but then we should have had Impeachments upon Impeachments, and the suspicions of selling and betraying the World into the hands of the *French*, would then have carry'd such Characters of Probability, that we would, in reverse of S——*B*——*S*——'s subtil Discovery, have concluded who they were that were the Instuments of *France*, and suppos'd them to have been as well paid for it, as perhaps some have been for later Services. I confess the Dominions in *Italy* are very valuable, yet no Naval Power belonging to them, they are not now so considerable as they were some Years ago. Nor is it certain, that notwithstanding the Partition Treaty, they would have been a sure Accession to the Crown of *France*, perhaps *France* would have found as much Opposition to it, as she is like to do now to her taking possession of the whole. The Pope would have struggled hard; It must have alarm'd the Court of *Rome*, and indeed all Popery mightily, to see the Pope surrounded with *French* Armies, and so much in their Power. The Popes pretensions on the Kingdom of *Naples* are of an old standing, and are not disputed. If the Pope should have refus'd to change his Vassal, and have upon that made use of the Arms of the Church, and invited the *Germans* to his Assistance, and the *Venetians* to open Passages to them both by Sea and Land, this must have brought on a new War, and made *Italy* the seat of it. It would have made an irreconcileable Breach between *France* and *Rome*. It is easy to see, what this might have ended in. It is true, we by the Treaty were to have assisted the *French*, but in the Progress of the War, we might have found just reasons of getting out of a Quarrel, and of becoming the Umpires in it. Would it be a Reflection on the King's Honour, if it were suggested, That perhaps he would have stood to this Treaty as most Princes do, when they see where the advantage lyes, and as the *French* King has always done, and most signally in Relation to this very Treaty? I can't think so meanly of the King's Wisdom and Experience, as to believe that he built much on the Faith and Honour of his most Christian Majesty, but he might imagine that age had quality'd that unquiet Spirit, which has given the world so much Disturbance. He might think that a bigotted Prince would above all other things desire to have the Papacy under his protection, that is to say, at his Mercy. He would perhaps chuse rather to have the Dominions that were yielded to him by the Treaty, which he might expect without the Trouble & charge of a War, than to embroil all his Affairs & engage in the Decline of his Life in a War, of which it is not easy to see the End. A Lady that has great Credit with him, might be known to be fond of this Accession of Empire, both as laying a great Obligation on the Succession; and as securing the quiet and Life of one in whom she has

so particular an Interest. A Minister compos'd of such young Persons as might hope to out-live their Monarch, for all his Immorality, would probably conclude that it would be more meritorious in another Reign to have extended the Empire of *France*, than to have rais'd a younger Son of *France*, so as perhaps he might be able one day to dispute matters with his Elder Brother. Upon one or more of these Reasons, or perhaps upon much better, the King might have reckon'd that the Treaty would have been better stood to by the *French*, without relying so entirely upon a Faith that had been so often given, and so seldom kept. He had likewise other things to depend on. It was reasonable to hope, that the *Emperor* would have come into it, tho' it had been only with this design, that by his Sons being in possession of the best parts of the *Spanish* Monarchy, he might thereby be the better enabled to lay Claim and struggle for the rest. Was it reasonable, to think that a Prince, who had no Naval Force would have maintain'd a Dispute in opposition to all the Naval Power of the World united against him? And could a Prince of such an exhausted Revenue hope to succeed in Competition against a Court so dexterous in all the methods of it, and so well furnisht with all that was necessary for making it most effectual? The *Emperor*'s Conduct in this matter had been so unaccountable in being so unactive to prevent it, that there was no reason to suspect his not submitting to the Partition Treaty, when he saw it could not be help'd. The King might likewise trust somewhat to the Vertues and to the Vices of the *Spaniards*. They have had an Antipathy to the *French* of above 200 Years standing. The *Spaniards* have never before this time been guilty of betraying their Country, a Fidelity without example has long supported a sinking Monarchy, and so it might have been still depended on, and their coming so tamely under a *French* Yoke, is a thing that was so little look'd for, that till all saw it, none could believe it. Upon all these Accounts it might seem reasonable enough for the King to imagin that the Treaty would have been stuck to without an Absolute Confidence in the Vertues of the most Christian King. And after all, as the K. of *Spain* had liv'd beyond all mens Expectations, so the King might have hop'd that he might languish out yet a few years more, and then the Revenue of the Crown of *England* would have been clear'd of all Anticipations, and in the mean while the *French* would have been obliged to keep such Measures as would have secur'd us from all attempts, and have sunk the hopes of a Treacherous Party among our selves, who had set up their Rest upon the greatness of *France*, and began now to revive their dead hopes, which seemed quite withered by the Peace of *Ryswick*, and by the seeming Friendship between our Court and that of *Versailes*. And now, if you will lay all this together, you will re-

tract

tract a little of the forwardneſs, and of the ſeverity of the Cenſures with which you may be apt to load that Treaty. Every Partition-Treaty is not to be condemned. The Triple Alliance was the Glory of K. *Charles's* Reign, and would have been its ſtrength, if he had ſtuck to it. And that was a Partition of the *Spaniſh Netherlands*, of which the Council of *Madrid* complain'd ſo much, that they threatned they would abandon all *Flanders*, rather than ſubmit to it; and yet they were wiſer when they ſaw they could not help themſelves. When *Spain* could not be defended but by our Arms, and by our Treaſure, it might be both reaſonable and juſt for us to conſider what Intereſt we had in preſerving any of our Dominion, and to take care of thoſe, wherein we were concerned moſt nearly, and particularly, and beſt able to defend, but leave the reſt to take their Fate. I am, *Sir*, *Yours*, &c.

A Second LETTER to a Friend, concerning the Partition Treaty, with his Anſwer.

I Am convinc'd, by your Letter, that it isnot ſafe to rely on common Fame, or to yield too far to the impreſſions, which the firſt appearances of things, and ſome general prejudices are apt to make. I conſider the Partition Treaty after another manner than I did. I ſee, the King might have two good Reaſons to hearken to a Propoſal of that Nature, from the *French* King, without the leaſt diſpoſition to truſt him, or to enter into cloſe Meaſures with him; which in my Opinion muſt always prove fatal to himſelf, to his Kingdoms, and indeed to all the reſt of *Europe*. But tho' you have gone a great way towards juſtifying the King, upon many Perſonal Accounts, for engaging in this Treaty; I do not find, you are your ſelf reconcil'd to it. You rather make an Excuſe for the King, than a Defence of the League. Therefore, for my own Satisfaction, and that of our Friends, I muſt become a little further troubleſome to you. I can't but think it a leſſening of the King's Character, if only in order to keep himſelf quiet at home, and to ſink the Hopes of a Treacherous Party among our ſelves (as you expreſs it) he could be induc'd to enter into a Treaty unjuſt in it ſelf and ruinous to Chriſtendom. It is ſo Repreſented to us. One is ſaid to have openly call'd it a Felonious Treaty. And we are told that a great Man, in another Publick Aſſembly, ſaid it was ridiculous and diſhonourable in the Project, and Miſchievous in the Conſequences. And yet after all, this Treaty was made by the King, let who will be concern'd in the Advice: And the *Dutch* are Parties to this Treaty, who are not us'd to

to be so grosly mistaken. We have been told, the King has a clear and more Universal Knowledge of the Affairs of *Europe* than any Man, and therefore we are amaz'd to see him enter into an Affair so very liable to censure. Tho' you are no Friend to this Treaty, yet you hear the talk of those who do not so much mislike it, and you will do me a very good Office, to make a Report of what is said in favour of it, that I may know how they Vindicate the Kings Honour, which is very dear to me; and may not rest under the Suspicion that the King would engage in unwise and unjustifiable Measures, upon the bare Consideration of Personal Safety and Present Quiet. *I am*, &c.

S I R,

YOUR Enquiries are made with so honest a meaning, that a good Subject can hardly refuse what you desire. And yet methinks, you make but an odd Choice of one, whom you admit to be no Favourer of the Treaty of Partition, to represent to you what is said in its Justification. But I will obey you, as well as my Memory will serve me, and what is omitted now may be supply'd in another Letter. It is not Flattery to say, the King is perfectly instructed in the Affairs of *Europe*. He has been at the head of Business for Thirty Years, and has encountred as great Difficulties as most Men ever did. This great experience, join'd with his thoughtful Temper and discerning Judgment, gives him advantages above most Princes, if not most Men. This is truly my Opinion, and I should think my self happy, if I could contribute to confirm others in the same thoughts. My own Dread of the Power of *France*, and my Detestation of her Politicks, may possibly have form'd in me too unreasonable Prejudices against a Treaty, which seem'd to add so much to her Dominions, and may have occasion'd me not to give all the attention I ought to the Arguments I have heard in defence of it; but I will fairly relate to you as much as I can call to mind of what I have heard on this Subject.

The Objections to the Treaty of Partition go both to the Justice & the Wisdom of it. It is said to be unjust in it self, as being a disposition of the Dominions of a Third Person then alive, made by a Confederacy of two strangers, with one of the Pretenders to the Succession, without the Consent of the other. It is said also to be unjust, as being inconsistent with the seperate Article of the Grand Alliance made 1689, whereby the States General stipulate with the Emperor, to assist him in taking the Succession of the *Spanish Monarchy*, in case of the then King of *Spain*'s Death without Issue.

It will not be amiss, for the better conceiving the Force of the Objections and the Answers, in a very few Words to state the several Pretensions to this great Succession. *Philip* the Third had Issue, besides his Son *Philip* the Fourth,

Three Daughters; *Anna*, the Eldest, Marry'd to *Lewis* the Thirteenth, whose Son is the present *French* King; *Margarita* the Second, Marry'd to the Emperor *Ferdinand* the Third, Father of the present Emperor; and *Catharina* marry'd to *Savoy*: *Philip* the Fourth had Issue, besides the last King of *Spain*, dead without Issue, two Daughters; the Eldest *Maria Theresa* Marry'd to *Lewis* the Fourteenth who had Issue, the *Dauphin*; the other, *Margarita*, Marry'd to the present Emperor, and by him she had Issue, only *Maria Antoinetta*, first Wife to the Elector of *Bavaria*, and they had one Child, the late Electoral Prince, born in 1691, and who dy'd the Sixth of *February*, 1698.

Upon the several Marriages of the two Infanta's with *Lewis* the Thirteenth, and *Lewis* the Fourteenth, solemn Renunciations were made of all Claims to the Succession of the *Spanish* Dominions, by them or their Descendants.

Those Renunciations the House of *Austria* insists upon as valid, and so their Claim takes place. The *French* pretend to object to their Validity, and Claim the Succession, as if nothing had pass'd to bar them.

This being the Case, it appears, the first Treaty is not liable to the objection of want of proper Parties, for as the French King, and the Dauphin entred into it; so the Elector of *Bavaria*, in behalf of his Son, in whom, at that time, the whole Right of the House of *Austria* was indisputably lodg'd, was not only consenting, but promoted it.

I shou'd observe to you, that the Treaty of Partition is look'd upon as an abusive Name, by those who think well of that Treaty. They say, it ought to be call'd, as it is, both in the Powers for making, and in the Treaty it self, a Treaty for the preservation of the Peace of *Europe*. I should also observe to you, that this first Treaty had a very good Consequence, for as soon as the Transaction took Air, it not only occasion'd the King of *Spain* to make a Will, by which he declar'd the Electoral Prince, his universal Heir, but it made the Emperor to acquiesce in it, who till that time was vigorously soliciting, by his Minister at *Madrid*, for a Will in favour of the Arch-Duke.

As to the second Treaty, it appears, by the Powers, which are in Print, That it began in *Holland*, by a Joynt Negotiation of the Emperor's Plenipotentiary, with those of *England*, *France*, and the States-General; but the Emperor not thinking it fit to appear a Party in such a Negotiation, for Reasons which were obvious enough, the Treaty was afterwards concluded without him.

To say it was unjust for that reason, is at the same time to say, the separate Article of the Grand Alliance was unjust; for that was disposing of the

the Dominions of a King then living, by an agreement of two Strangers with one only of the Pretenders. As the Emperor was no Party to this last Treaty, so *France* was no Party to the first. If it was consistent with Justice, for the King of *England* and the States to agree, that one of the Pretenders should have the whole, without any Privity or Consent of the other, or of *Spain*: How could it be unjust (as to the Nature of the Contract) to enter into an Agreement with one only of the Pretenders, for distributing the Succession among all that claim'd.

When Controversies arise between Sovereign Princes, there is no Judicature to determine of the Right. And they are at Liberty to refuse to submit to a Mediation, which is often hard to bring about, because both Parties must agree in the Mediators. Controversies of this sort would never have an end, but in the ruine of one of the Parties, and perhaps of neighbouring Nations in the consequence, unless other Princes and States may by a proper interposition in such a manner as they think most agreeable to the Justice and to the good of their own Subjects, oblige all the Pretenders to recede from Extremities, and in case of Obstinacy on any side, to assist those who are willing to yield, for the sake of Peace. This has been the approv'd Practice of all Ages. It is not necessary to mention Instances to prove what cannot be deny'd; —— Otherwise, what was done in the Case of the late Difference between *Denmark* and *Holstein*, is a fresh Example, much less is it necessary to go about to make a more particular application of this Rule to what was then the Case.

A well-founded apprehension of an unreasonable encrease of Power in a Neighbouring Prince, has been always held to be a just ground of making War; it may be better defended, to be a just reason to prevent it by a Treaty.

An Accession of the entire Spanish Dominions, either to the Emperor (whose Claim was for himself, and his lineal Descendants) or to *France*, must unquestionably have form'd a Power extremely terrible to the rest of *Europe*. It was therefore necessary, to think of dividing the Succession, or turning it out of the direct Line, for the common security of Christendom.

Princes are bound to provide for the safety of their Subjects by all reasonable ways. If the most eligible cann't be arriv'd at, they must pursue such methods as are practicable. It was visible the French King was resolv'd not to acquiesce in the Renunciations, his Flatterers had absolutely harden'd him in the Opinion, that all those solemn Acts were insignificant; and to make good these sentiments, he had not only imployed his Lawyers, but his Arms, in the Dispute, for many years. This the Emperor well knew, nay it is expresly declar'd in the separate Article of the Grand Alliance, So

that

that when the Accident happen'd, the War was inevitable, and the Accident was expected every day. No care had been taken to form the neceſſary Alliances on the concluſion of the Treaty of *Reſwick*. Nothing was determin'd as to the Spaniſh Succeſſion. No Proviſion for ſecuring any thing Stipulated by the Grand Alliance. On the contrary, ſome things had paſs'd at that time, which neceſſarily made a ſtrangeneſs between the Emperor and the Proteſtant Princes. No Arguments were omitted to draw him into New Meaſures, in order to make the ſeparate Article of the Grand Alliance ſignificant and effectual. And it was highly reaſonable to inſiſt upon terms, when it was ſo freſh in memory, where the burthen of the laſt War lay. But by reaſon of the very ſlow meaſures of the Court of *Vienna*, and the particular intereſts which the Emperor thought himſelf under a neceſſity of managing with the Court at *Madrid*, nothing had been done, or was likely to be done on that ſide, and at the ſame time the Subjects of *England* and *Holland* ſeem'd neither willing nor well able to enter into a new War. *France* did not only continue arm'd, as during the War, but was at a vaſt expence in buying Horſes for remounting their Cavalry, and for liſting the ableſt men as faſt as they were Disbanded by the Confederates. Without a Treaty a War was inevitable; or rather, *France* was Maſter of all without a War. This was the unhappy neceſſity under which the King and the States found themſelves. And in ſuch circumſtances, where was the Injuſtice to accept of the Contract of the *Fr.* K. & the *Dauphin*, to content themſelves with a part only of that vaſt Succeſſion, and ſuch a part as would not only be leaſt inconvenient to the Parties contracting, but to the General Liberty and ſecurity of *Europe*, rather than to leave him in circumſtances to ſeize the whole, or at leaſt to take immediate poſſeſſion of thoſe Parts, which would neceſſarily and ſuddenly endanger the Trade and Safety of the *Engliſh* and *Dutch*.

Upon the foot of this Treaty, the King and the States acquir'd an explicit and direct Right to compel the French *King to acquieſce in the ſhare allotted to him, which perhaps was wanting before. For tho'* Spain, *in reſpect of the ſeveral Renunciations and ſolemn Acts, had an expreſs Right to oppoſe the future Pretences of* France *to any part of that Succeſſion, yet it was not plain, that by renewing his Claim, he violated any League with* England *or* Holland, *which would be the Caſe, after his entring into this Treaty.*

There is another very conſiderable thing to juſtify this Treaty, if it be true (as it has been affirm'd) that during the Tranſaction in Holland, *in the Summer* 1699, *the Emperor's Miniſter's, tho' they declar'd they could never make themſelves Parties to an Agreement for diſmembring of the* Spaniſh *Monarchy, which would wholly ruine their affairs at* Madrid, *yet they did not expreſs any great averſion to be ſeemingly forc'd to ſome Reaſonable Terms. It has not often been known, that a deliberate*

deliberate Act of three Sovereign Powers, made upon very weighty Grounds, has been so frankly call'd unjust. The Emperor has not found cause to give it that hard Name. Nay, the French themselves who have violated this Treaty, in the most open and shameless Manner, and want to the highest Degree an Excuse for Breach of Faith, and had a good one, if the Treaty was unjust, yet they have never call'd it by that Name, but have contented themselves to take up the wretched Pretence, that by breaking the League, they have pursu'd the Spirit and meaning of it.

This is all I shall say to you, at present, with respect to the Justice of this Treaty, that which you desire further, is to hear how it is defended from being Impolitick to such a Degree as to be Ridiculous, as you say it has been styl'd. I have already stated to you, how the Circumstances of Affairs abroad stood, and in my Answer to your former Letter, I have observ'd to you what Disposition, as to War, had appear'd in England, and I will repeat nothing. It was evident, the French King was in a Condition to take possession of what Parts he pleas'd of the Spanish Dominions, if not all, without opposition: And that if some thing was not done, previously to the King of Spain's Death, it would be too late then to talk of forming Alliances.

This Reasoning has been too unhappily justify'd by what we have seen since. France has taken Possession of all the Dominions of Spain, without the least Obstructions, and before any Measures could be entred upon to prevent it. The Friends to the Partition-Treaty say, the World will Judge which was the wisest Course, to provide before hand against so great an Evil, or to be put to play the difficult After-Game of recovering things out of the hands of France.

In so critical a Juncture, the King and the States-General judg'd it reasonable, to hearken to the Proposal of a Negociation, as the only means left to prevent the impending Destruction of Europe. They were not insensible, how little the French Faith was to be depended on, but they were not put in a worse Condition by the Treaty. On the contrary, if the French King should not stand to it, the English and Dutch had an indisputable Ground to resent the Perfidiousness, and would be justify'd by all Christendom, in directly joyning to assist the House of Austria. And till that breach happen'd, the Emperor might see how far he might depend upon their actual Assistance, and what care they had taken of the House of Austria.

To think of Treating with the French King upon such a Subject, and to yield nothing to him, was indeed Ridiculous. All then that remain'd, was to make the best Terms possible; in the doing whereof, as the Interest of the House of Austria was to be sincerely and heartily espous'd, and a solicitous Care us'd that the Ballance of Europe should not be entirely broken, so it concern'd England and Holland, who were the Parties contracting, not to neglect themselves, but to make such a Distribution, as might be least prejudicial to their Interests.

The Three Things which they were principally oblig'd to take care of, was their Security, their Trade, and the Common Interest of the Protestant Religion. In

order to this, they were first to take care of the Barrier in Flanders, for making good whereof so much Money had been spent and so much Blood had been spilt, it being demonstrably plain, that if France was possess'd of the Spanish Netherlands, it was not possible for the Dutch to bear long the Expence of supporting themselves; and when they fell a Prey to France, (notwithstanding the vain discourses, we heard not long before, of what we were able to do,) England was not likely to be free any great while.

The Second Thing which concern'd both Nations highly, was the preserving the Trade of Spain, and the use of her Ports. This need not be inlarg'd upon, the present Apprehension of the Danger of losing this Advantage, has made it very sensibly understood by every body.

The Third Thing which concern'd England infinitely, and the Dutch not a little, was to keep the West-Indies, and the Trade thither, in the Condition they then stood. For it will not be deny'd, if ever France can appropiate to it self the Trade of Spain, and the Management of the Spanish West-Indies, she will soon be Mistress of the World.

These were the great Things to be first look'd after, and for these the Treaty did fully provide. It is not to be deny'd but that the Turky Trade was of great consequence to both Nations, and the Trade of Italy not inconsiderable, especially to Holland; And it were to have been wish'd that every thing could have been intirely gain'd, but when that was impossible, the most weight was to be laid on what was of the greatest Consequence. It is said in a certain Letter, which is charg'd by some, as favouring the Partition-Treaty; and by others as written against it, That if Sicily were in the French hands, they would be intirely Masters of the Levant Trade. They who declare themselves for that Treaty, quarrel at that Expression as too forcible. No question, in case of a Rupture, if the French had Sicily, they might, at least for a time, give a great Interruption to the Turkey Trade, but if the Ports of Spain, and its Dominions were open to the Dutch and English Fleets, that inconvenience would be in a great measure avoided. Whereas, as the Case now stands, for want of the Effect of such a Treaty, the Spanish Ports are like to be entirely shut up; and consequently all Trade into the Mediterranian, if ever a War should break out, must become entirely impracticable.

The Treaty of Partition, if it had been stood to, had plac'd Spain, the West-Indies, the Netherlands and Milan, in such hands, as France could expect no sincere Assistance from. What real Addition of Power Naples and Sicily would have brought to her, is not so plain, France is a compact united Strength. Whether she would have been stronger by the Possession of two remote Countries, whose Natives have the utmost hatred to the French, Experience only would have shewn. Italy would have been alarm'd to the last degree, to find the French taking Possession of so large a Part of it, which it could not be possible to prevent, considering the

Power

Power and Preparations of France. *But this would not have been the first time that the* French *had got to be Masters of* Naples *and* Sicily, *and yet were not able to hold them. Certain it is the Court of* Rome *would have found it self oblig'd to set all its Engines on work to prevent the establishing of that Slavery, which was inevitably coming upon them. They would be discerning enough to see, that from the hour the* French *King became peaceably settled in the Possession of* Naples *and* Sicily, *the Pope must sink in his Character, and would be no more than a* French *Bishop. The rest of the Catholick World would hardly consider him as a common Father, who could be made and unmade at the pleasure of* France. *Without pretending to Prophecy, one may say literally, That Heaven and Earth would have been mov'd upon this occasion: The Church would have drawn out all her Forces Spiritual and Temporal, and besides the Influence she would always have upon the* Italian *Princes and States, which is avowedly not little, They themselves are quick-sighted enough to see what different Figures the Princes of* France *make in this Age from what they made heretofore, and to learn Caution from so significant Examples. Besides, the Pope's Remonstrances would have had the more Authority as well as Vigor from the scandalous Appearance it would have had to the whole Papal World, that* France *in Conjunction with two Heretick Powers should dispose of the Fiefs of the Church. The Emperor would undoubtedly have been solicited by all sorts of Arguments to assist the Church, and assert the Liberty of* Italy, *and how far he might have been able to resist, might not be difficult to guess. All the Catholick Princes of* Germany *were at liberty to act as the Conjecture invited them. The* Italians *would not have apprehended any thing from* Spain, *they would have understood easily which way the Arch-Dukes Wishes would go. The Duke of* Lorrain's *affection to the House of* Austria *is so well known, that it is certain the* French *could have depended on nothing from* Milan, *in his hands. And tho' the late Chancellor in his Letter, said, that if the Treaty should take place, and* Milan *could be relieved by Sea, it would be of little signification in the hand of any Prince: We see he was mistaken, and that very powerful Reliefs might be sent by Land to* Milan, *and the Emperor and Empire might always have an open way into* Italy, *thro' that Country. The King of* France *would have been cautious to have left his Frontier naked towards* Flanders, *when in Possession of a Prince of the House of* Austria, *or to have left the* Rhine *unguarded, when the Pope would be sure to have a prevailing Power with the Ecclesiastical Electors, and the other Catholick Princes of the Empire.*

This would have been the highest Security to the Protestant Interest, for which certainly we were above all other things concern'd. Italy *would have been the Scene of the War, where upon all Accounts we ought to wish it, and not only as being the most remote from us. The Apprehension of a Catholick League, which is no Chimera, and which it is to be too justly fear'd may be the immediate Consequence of a settled Peace amongst the Popish Powers, when the Zeal of the Emperor, as well as of the*

French

French *King is consider'd, would have been far remov'd. In such a state of Things, we could apprehend nothing as to our Trade, not even in the* Mediterranian. *All Parties would have found it reasonable to be courting the Great Naval Powers of the World. We might be Neuter if we thought fit, or might have made our own Terms. We were not bound to take any other Share in the War than we pleas'd, for tho' we stood oblig'd to see the Treaty Executed, yet in the utmost Strictness that was all. We were not bound to maintain the respective Parties in Possession. We might have enjoy'd the Advantages of Peace, or we might have otherwise found our Anvantages in return for our Assistance, in case we chuse to give it to either side.*

But they who have a mind to extol the Wisdom of the King and the States, for entring into the Treaty of Partition, found themselves most on the ill Consequences which have appeared upon the laying it aside. They pretend to think it wonderful, that men should be quarrelling with so much heat at a Transaction, whereby such large Territories of the King of *Spain*'s Dominions were to be delivered up to the *French* King; and at the same time, with so much Patience and Temper see him take Possession of the *WHOLE*, and shew so little Concern to redeem that time which was lost, by their late Coming Together. They say it will cost many Lives and much Treasure, before *Europe* can see Things upon so good a Foot, as that Treaty put them.

They go further, and say, That the same Men who promoted the Clamour at this Partition-Treaty, are labouring at this very time to make one much worse for *England* and *Holland*, for the Liberty of *Europe*, and for the Protestant Interest. For already they stick not, in their Discourses, to make it a Fault, to talk of asserting the Pretence of the House of *Austria* to the whole *Spanish* Succession, and this is not to be wonder'd at by any who observ'd their early Zeal for the Duke of *Anjou*'s being own'd as King of *Spain*, and their Question ready form'd for that Purpose.

I have set down what occurr'd to my Memory, according to your desire. You must look on me as not responsible for the Solidity of any of these Arguments, on the one side; or pretending to have said all that is to be said in Defence of the Treaty, on the other. I am so sensible of this latter, that I find my self under an Obligation of telling you, That upon your intimating to me, what parts of the Account I have given you, appear to you to be most weak and imperfect, I will let you know, whether the Defect proceeded only from my want of Memory.

I am, &c.

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